GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:239
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2007
PROVISION OF NEW CONNECTIONS
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether tele-density 9.91` targeted by the Government in 2007 has been achieved ;

(b) if so, the details of urban tele-density and rural tele-density during the last three years, as on date, State-wise ;

(c) the details of new connections provided during the above period in Government/Private sector, company-wise, in urban and rural areas separately; and

(d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to increase tele-density in the rural areas?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) Yes, Sir. The over all tele-density of India is 19.86% as on 30.06.2007.(latest available).

(b) The details of urban tele-density and rural tele-density during the last three years, as on date, State-wise are given in ANNEXURE-A.

(c) The details of number of telephones for the last three years in Government/ Private sector, company-wise, in urban and rural areas separately are given in ANNEXURE-B.

(d) The specific steps taken during the last three years for providing better telecom services in the rural areas of the country are as under :

(i) A non-lapsable Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has been set up to provide support for expansion of telecommunication services in rural and remote areas. Both public and private sectors licensees are eligible for such support. The public and private sector operators have been awarded tenders for provisioning of Rural Direct Exchange Lines (R-DELs) in all the 1685 net cost positive Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) through the support from USOF. Support for maintenance of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) and setting up of Rural Community Phones (RCPs) is also provided through USOF. As far as the remaining net cost negative (Viable) SDCAs are concerned, market forces are expected to take care of the emerging demand in rural areas.

(ii) Large-scale deployment of WLL (Wireless in local loop) network in rural areas has been planned by BSNL.

(iii) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has relaxed the distance for laying outdoor cables from 2.5 Km to 5.0 Km of Landline exchanges to facilitate larger coverage in the rural areas from the existing exchanges.

(iv) BSNL is deploying its Mobile Network in all the Highways, Important Towns, Pilgrim Centers and State Highways to give incidental coverage to large parts of rural areas.

(v) Agreements were signed in March 2005 with M/s BSNL, M/s RIL, M/s TTL and M/s TTL (MH) for installation of individual rural household Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) in the country during 01.04.2005 and 31.03.2007. These RDELs were to be installed in the eligible 1685 Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) in the country, where cost of providing telephone connection is more than the revenue earned.The share of SDCAs amongst these companies was 1267, 203, 172 and 43 respectively. About 25,64,577 RDELs were provided [M/s BSNL (8,91,306), M/s RIL (7,37,207), M/s RRL (7,26,915) and M/s TTL (MH): 2,09,149] till March 2007 under this scheme.

(vi) A scheme has recently been launched by USO Fund to provide subsidy support for setting up and managing 7871 number of infrastructure sites (towers) spread over 500 districts in 27 states. About 2 lakh villages are likely to be covered under this scheme.The infrastructure so created shall be shared by three service providers for provision of mobile services including other Wireless Access Services like Wireless on Local Loop (WLL) using Fixed/Mobile terminals in the specified rural and remote areas, where there is no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage.The agreements effective from 01.06.2007 have been signed with the successful bidders. Mobile services through these shared towers are targeted to be made operational in a phased manner by May 2008.